POLITICAL REPORT

SUBMITTED AT THE NATIONAL POLITICAL UNION CONFERENCE BETWEEN THE NEO LAO HAKSAT AND THE PATRIOTIC NEUTRALIST FORCES (OCTOBER 1965)

EDITIONS OF THE NEO LAO HAKSAT

POLITICAL REPORT

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(October 8, 1965)

— His Highness **Prince Souphanouvong**, Chairman of the Central Committee of the Neo Lao Haksat and Vice-Premier of the tripartite National Union Government submitting the Political Report.

Members of the Presidium,

Fellow Delegates,

The revolutionary struggle of our people is unfolding in most favourable historical conditions. The world situation has been developing and continues to develop to the best advantage of the patriotic and revolutionary forces, and to the disadvantage of imperialism and other reactionary forces. On the whole, the patriotic and revolutionary forces in the world are powerfully growing, while imperialism, headed by U.S. imperialism, has been driven to a passive position everywhere and is suffering repeated defeats.

The mighty socialist camp, the citadel of Revolution and World Peace, is daily gaining strength. In the developed capitalist countries, especially in Western Europe, North America and Oceania, the struggle for peace, a better life and democracy is developing vigorously.

In particular, the national-liberation movement is surging forward in mighty tidal waves, causing the colonial system of imperialism to crumble in big chunks. Asia, Africa and Latin America have become the main storm centre of world revolution. U.S. imperialism, the most reactionary and die-hard ringleader of imperialism, is now in a passive and losing position in Viet Nam, Laos, the Dominican Republic, Cambodia, Indonesia

and other countries. Never before has the struggle of the world's peoples against U.S. imperialism developed so powerfully both in scope and intensity as is the case today. Never before has U.S. imperialism been so isolated and so sternly condemned as it is today. In the United States itself, the people's struggle against the war of aggression and the policy of racial discrimination of the Johnson Administration, for democratic liberties and peace, has assumed unprecedented dimensions.

Like a cornered tiger with wounds all over his body, U.S. imperialism is now in frenzied convulsions and has embarked on the adventurist path of aggression and war. But the more frenzied its convulsions, the fiercer the blows it will sustain, and the heavier and more ignominious its defeats.

Unfolding in such highly favourable historical conditions, and enjoying the warm encouragement, support and aid of the world revolutionary movement, our people's struggle against the U.S. imperialists, for national salvation will unquestionably end in victory, whatever the difficulties may be.

Fellow Delegates,

Our present struggle against the U.S. imperialists, for national salvation is precisely the continuation of the struggle which our people have waged for twenty years now against foreign invasion and for independence. In the course of these twenty years, our people, true to our ancestors' traditions of heroic and dauntless struggle, have fought against two enemies, namely,

French colonialism which was defeated after nine years of resistance war, and U.S. imperialism which we have been victoriously combating for the past eleven years.

As early as 1950, turning to account the weakening and defeats of the French colonialists, the U.S imperialists intervened in Indo-China with the set purpose of supplanting them at a later stage and turning our country into a U.S. new-type colony and military base for aggression. In 1954, after the defeated French colonialists were compelled to withdraw their troops from Laos, the U.S. imperialists set about putting their dark schemes into execution. To this end, they resorted to military and economic aid with conditions attached, relied on the Laotian reactionary forces, rigged up a puppet administration and a mercenary army, and unleashed a "special war" of aggression in our country. Soon after the signing of the 1954 Geneva Agreements on Indo-China, they instigated their henchmen to launch continuous military attacks on the regroupment zone of the Pathet Lao forces in the two provinces of Samneua and Phongsaly. But this scheme was shattered by our armed forces and people. The United States and its henchmen were compelled to sign an agreement on the cessation of hostilities, and to accept, by the end of 1957, the formation of the first National Union Government with the participation of the Pathet Lao.

But less than one year after, in 1958, the U.S. imperialists and their henchmen, betraying their own signature, overthrew the National Union Government and set up a pro-U.S. reactionary government headed

by Phoui Sananikone. Thereafter, they openly repudiated the 1954 Geneva Agreements, subjected the cadres of the Neo Lao Haksat and other Laotian patriots to measures of terror and reprisal of unprecedented scope and ferocity, and relying on the puppet forces, unleashed throughout Laos a war of aggression under the guise of a protracted civil war. Our people were thus again compelled to take up arms in self-defence. After the August 9, 1960 Coup d'Etat staged in Vientiane by a number of patriotic officers and men, the anti-U.S. Front of the Laotian people was broadened, the bloc of alliance and cooperation between the Neo Lao Haksat and the Neutralist forces was formed and steadily strengthened. As a result, the U.S. imperialists and their henchmen sustained heavy blows. Repeatedly defeated in the military field and isolated politically, they had again to accept a peaceful settlement of the Laotian problem, viz., the conclusion of tripartite agreements, the formation of a Second National Union Government, and the signing of the 1962 Geneva Agreements on Laos which reaffirmed the sovereignty, independence, peace, neutrality, unity and territorial integrity of Laos.

Thus, from 1954 to 1962, agreements were concluded twice at Geneva, but the U.S. imperialists and their agents have ceaselessly betrayed and sabotaged them. These realities of history have shown that just as the leopard can never change its spots, the reactionary nature of the U.S. imperialists remains unchanged. Obviously our people should never entertain any illusion whatsoever about their professed "desire for peace".

Experience has also shown that every time they are defeated on the battlefield, the U.S. imperialists and their henchmen return to the Conference table and resort to political manœuvres, but their basic policy remains a policy of force, and their invariable design is to wipe out the patriotic and revolutionary forces of our people and turn our country into a U.S. new-type colony and war base in South-East Asia.

Past experience has also shown that in view of the justice of our cause, our ability to rely on the mighty strength of the people, and our determination to fight to the end, it is possible to build up revolutionary forces from scratch, and gradually develop them, and frustrate all enemy manœuvres, no matter how cruel and perfidious they may be.

Fellow Delegates,

Over the past three years since the formation of the National Union Government, the U.S. imperialists and their henchmen have continuously, systematically and frantically sabotaged the Geneva Agreements and the agreements concluded among the three parties, and step by step pushed forward their neo-colonialist policy of aggression in the form of a "special war".

In the political field: The most outstanding feature is the fact that the U. S. imperialists and their henchmen have concentrated their efforts on undermining the tripartite National Union Government and sabotaging the Geneva, Zurich and Plain of Jars Agreements which obviously constitute

an obstacle to their policy of aggression against our country.

Less than eight months after the setting up of the National Union Government — that is, after a period of stabilization of their ranks and consolidation of their forces — the U.S. imperialists and their henchmen set about attacking, openly and impudently, the organizational structure of the National Union Government and the principle of unanimity among the three parties inside the Government; they tried by all means to hinder and sabotage the implementation of its political programme which had been unanimously approved by the three parties. They refused to hand over government services to the Neo Lao Haksat and Neutralist Ministers and Vice-Ministers, and later on went to the length of fomenting tension and instability in Vientiane, and assassinating patriotic and progressive personalities; the most impudent case being the murder of the late Minister for Foreign Affairs Quinim Pholsena, a genuine patriotic Neutralist and an active member of the tripartite National Union Government. These activities of sabotage reached a climax with the April 19, 1964 military putsch engineered in Vientiane by ultra-reactionary elements of the Rightwing party with U.S. wire-pulling. The tripartite National Union Government was impudently overthrown. Thereafter, by resorting to the trick of "government reshuffles", they ousted in point of fact the Ministers and Vice-Ministers of the Neo Lao Haksat and the patriotic Neutralist forces and brazenly replaced them with Rightist pro-U.S. agents parading as "Neutralists", thus turning the National Union Government into a

puppet administration and an efficient tool in the service of the U.S. schemes of aggression.

Of late, on orders from the U.S. imperialists, the Vientiane reactionaries and Prince Souvanna Phouma went a step further in their betrayal of the national interests and sabotage of the policy of neutrality.

They staged the farce of separate partial elections, and rigged up a new puppet "National Assembly"; thereafter, they carried out a second reshuffle of the puppet administration in Vientiane and openly placed it under the control of the puppet "National Assembly"

This is a new, extremely serious act of sabotage of the Geneva, Zurich and Plain of Jars Agreements, and an attempt to do away with the legal basis of the tripartite National Union Government and completely destroy national concord and unity; this has led to extremely grave consequences.

Along with the wrecking of the National Union Government, another perfidious political manœuvre of the U.S. imperialists consists in trying to disintegrate the forces of the Neutralist party, to destroy the bloc of alliance and cooperation between the Neo Lao Haksat and the Neutralist party, and to sow division among the different nationalities in an attempt to narrow down and weaken the anti-U.S. Front of our people.

They have tried by all means to terrorize and assassinate the genuine patriotic Neutralists and win over the vacillating and degenerate elements in the ranks of the Neutralist forces. Guided by their personal motives and selfish interests, Prince Souvanna Phouma and Kongle have embarked on the path of betrayal of the

national interests, have left the ranks of the patriotic Neutralists and the alliance between the Neo Lao Haksat and the Neutralist forces, and have become henchmen of the U.S. imperialists.

As an immediate step, the U.S. imperialists and their agents are making every effort to infiltrate into the ranks of the patriotic Neutralist forces, to disintegrate them, to sow dissension between them and the Neo Lao Haksat.

At the same time, they try to make the most of the contradictions and prejudices among the different nationalities, and to inveigle bad elements and credulous persons from these nationalities into following them, fomenting troubles and engaging in sabotage activities in the liberated zone, the purpose being to divide and weaken the united bloc of our people.

In an attempt to fool public opinion at home and abroad and to cover up their dark schemes, the U.S. imperialists and their henchmen have unceasingly resorted to fabrications and have gone to the length of launching slanderous propaganda campaigns against the socialist countries, particularly the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam and the People's Republic of China, as well as the Neo Lao Haksat and the patriotic Neutralist forces which are allegedly responsible for the tension in Laos.

In the military field: The U. S. imperialists have strengthened their collusion with their satellites in South Viet Nam and Thailand, and used their Laotian henchmen to push ahead their scheme to turn Laos into a battlefield of coordination, to intensify and expand the war of aggression

in Laos and in South Viet Nam. To this end, they have reinforced the Laotian mercenary army whose strength has been raised from 30,000 to 60,000 men. They have built many military bases in Laos and illegally brought in tens of thousands of tons of arms, ammunition, and war materials, thousands of military advisers and military personnel from the United States and a number of its satellites. With these mercenary troops, the U.S. imperialists and their henchmen have launched continuous nibbling attacks on our liberated zone. From minor attacks, they have subsequently passed on to big military campaigns involving 10 to 20 batallions under the joint command of U.S., Thailand and South Vietnamese advisers and supported by artillery, armoured cars and aircraft. Most typical of these are Operations "Muong Phan", "Samsone" (Three Arrows) and "Sonsay" (Victorious Arrow). In spite of repeated defeats, they are still actively preparing for new attacks on the liberated zone.

In the zone under their control, the U.S. imperialists and their henchmen have conducted continual "pacification" and "clean-up" operations, resulting in an atmosphere of extreme tension, heavy losses in human lives and property for our compatriots, and serious hindrances to their livelihood. In furtherance of their military plans, they have recently put to the test a new and most dangerous manœuvre: under the pretence of promoting "rural development", they have organized a number of "solidarity villages" and "prosperity zones" at Phon Hong (Vientiane province), Muong Cao (Borikhane), Muong Phieng (Sayaboury), Nakhonepheng (Attopeu), etc. In fact these are nothing but disguised

concentration camps on the pattern of the "strategic hamlets" in South Viet Nam. Inside these camps, various methods, ranging from deception, demagogy, cajolery and corruption to intimidation and coercion, have been used to secure a tight control over the people, to drive a wedge between the population and their cadres and armed forces, and step by step force the people to oppose the Revolution. It is to be expected that this form of organization will be widely applied in other regions.

Faced with repeated defeats in their military and political manœuvres and the impotence of the puppet troops and administration, and in coordination with the intensification of their war of aggression in South Viet Nam, the U.S. imperialists made on June 11, 1964, a most serious step further in their direct aggression against our country : they started a war of destruction with the bombing of Khangkhay township by U.S. aircraft.

Since then, in defiance of the sovereignty and independence of Laos, of international law, and of the people's protests in our country and in the world, U.S. jets of all types, taking off from air bases in Thailand and South Viet Nam and from the Seventh Fleet, have daily bombed and strafed our liberated zone from North to South. Night and day, they have showered explosive, napalm and phosphorous bombs on administrative offices, schools, hospitals and villages. They have even sprayed noxious chemicals on certain regions with a view to destroying the crops and vegetation, and killing human beings and domestic animals.

As a result, hundreds of compatriots of ours, mostly old folks, women and children, have lost their lives, thousands of civilian houses have been reduced to ashes, and a great number of pagodas, schools and hospitals destroyed. The U.S. pirates have spared not even bonzes, patients under treatment and children attending classes. These savage and odious crimes of theirs have aroused the seething indignation of our people who will curse them for ever.

By extending its air war of destruction in our country, U.S imperialism has dropped its mask and revealed its true features as the most sanguinary and ferocious colonialist aggressor and the most dangerous enemy of our people.

In the economic and cultural field: With the import of great quantities of unsalable foodstuffs and luxury goods into Laos, the U. S. imperialists have monopolized our internal markets, brought about an increasing depreciation of the Kip and a rocketing of the costs of living. As a result, our national economy, and in particular our agriculture and handicrafts, are decaying; the population in the towns and their neighbourhood, particularly the labourers, soldiers and low-ranking civil servants, are faced with increasing difficulties in their daily life. The imperialists are making their best to promote gambling and debauchery, and to give the towns and cities a varnish of seeming prosperity, with a view to misleading and corrupting our people, first and foremost the youth, thus turning them into degenerate elements caring little for the national interests, incapable of recognizing

the enemy and of realizing the grave danger which faces our country.

In short, all the above-mentioned manœuvres of the U.S. imperialists and their agents are aimed at gradually intensifying the « special war » of aggression against our country, wiping out its patriotic and revolutionary forces and enslaving its people.

On the whole, the policy of aggression of the U.S. imperialists and the betrayal of the pro-U.S. reactionaries are at the origin of the countless calamities which have befallen our country over the past 11 years ; they are the immediate cause of the continuous aggravation of the tension in Laos, and constitute a grave menace to the security of Laos, of Indo-China as a whole, and of South-East Asia.

Members of the Presidium,
Fellow Delegates,

Over the past three years, the U.S. imperialists and their henchmen have been thrown into frenzied convulsions and have resorted to most cruel and perfidious manœuvres. But that does not mean that they have achieved much of their objective.

Continuing our people's traditions of dauntless struggle against foreign aggression, the Neo Lao Haksat, in unity with the other patriotic forces and together with the whole nation, has waged a resolute struggle against the U.S. imperialists for national salvation, and has won big victories in many fields.

Over the past three years, we have firmly held the banner of peace and neutrality, and have persistently

struggled to uphold the Geneva Agreements and the agreements signed among the three parties. We have demanded that the tripartite National Union Government be restored. Although the said Government has been practically abolished, this is not an indication of the strength of the U.S. imperialists and their henchmen, instead, it bespeaks their defeat, passivity and embarrassment. We have unremittingly attacked the enemy in the political field, exposing the perfidious disruptive manoeuvres of the U.S. invaders and the Laotian traitors, and upholding our just cause. We have thus succeeded in further isolating the enemy and winning the approval and support of broad sections of public opinion at home and abroad. The Ministers and Vice-Ministers who are members of the Neo Lao Haksat and the genuine Neutralist forces are always determined to attend to their functions and tasks under the Zurich and Plain of Jars Agreements ; they are determined to uphold and carry out the political programme of the National Union Government. This resolute attitude of theirs has met with the warm approval and support of our people, both in the liberated zone and in the zone under enemy control.

The U.S. imperialists wanted to overthrow the tripartite National Union Government and to rig up a "strong puppet administration" composed of the most reactionary henchmen so as to put into execution their scheme of expanding the "special war" in Laos. But, contrary to their wishes, they have reaped pitiful results. The U.S. policy of changing horses midway has resulted in fierce in-fighting and continual and ever

more acute contradictions among the puppets divided into many groups.

The U.S. imperialists and their henchmen wanted to disintegrate the Neutralist forces and to destroy the alliance and cooperation between the Neo Lao Haksat and the Neutralist forces. But the genuine Neutralist forces have preserved and developed their ranks, while the alliance between our two forces has been firmly consolidated. Although the U.S. imperialists and their henchmen have succeeded in winning over certain vacillating elements in the ranks of the Neutralist forces, this has in no way weakened the genuine Neutralist forces. The patriotic Neutralist forces in Khangkhay have resolutely opposed the attempts of the U.S. imperialists and the Laotian reactionaries to secure control over them, have maintained and consolidated their ranks and, together with the Neo Lao Haksat, have driven the enemy from the Plain of Jars. The patriotic Neutralist forces in Phongsaly have maintained their stand of peace, neutrality and opposition to the U.S. imperialists and have succeeded in preserving and developing their strength.

Though the U.S. imperialists and their henchmen have succeeded in winning over Souvanna Phouma and Kongle whose names are being used to mislead public opinion, the Souvanna Phouma-Kongle card has increasingly lost its value; contradictions subsist and are developing between the Souvanna Phouma-Kongle group and the Phoui Sananikone-Kouprasith clique, and a continual process of differentiation is taking

place in the ranks of the forces of Souvanna Phouma and Kongle.

The U.S. imperialists and their henchmen have tried by every means to divide the united bloc of our people. Yet, over the past year, we have achieved very good results in our propaganda work with the bandits. Over 30,000 compatriots of ours from various nationalities have been liberated from the enemy's claws. Through our propaganda and explanations, through the correct application of our policy with regard to nationalities and other practical works, we have persuaded a number of men who had been led astray and had turned bandits to return to the people and to the path of the just cause; we have also promoted better understanding and closer unity among the various nationalities.

The U.S. imperialists and their henchmen have resorted to most perfidious manœuvres and put into action their huge propaganda machine to distort our just struggle in an attempt to isolate us before world opinion. But, contrary to their wishes, the international prestige of the Laotian patriotic and revolutionary forces has steadily increased. The just struggle of our people has gained the sympathy and moral and material support and assistance from the governments and peoples of the socialist countries, and of many nationalist countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America, and from the peace-loving peoples throughout the world. Through the contacts our people's delegations had with those of many other countries at the Conference of the International Trade Union Committee for Solidarity with the people of

Vietnam against U.S. aggression held in Hanoi, the Indo-Chinese People's Conference held in Phnom-Penh and other international conferences, we have given our friends all over the world better understanding of our struggle and we have heard countless voices strongly condemning the U.S. imperialists' aggression against our country and firmly supporting our people's struggle. At the same time, our people can be proud of having, by their struggle against U.S. aggression, for national salvation, fulfilled their obligations as a nation defending an outpost of the battle against U.S. imperialism in South-East Asia and contributed to the world people's struggle against the U.S. aggressors, for national liberation and peace.

The U.S. imperialists and their henchmen wanted to attack and destroy at all costs our liberated zone. Although they have actually caused us a number of difficulties, our vast liberated zone, which accounts for two-thirds of the national territory and nearly half of the country's population, has been preserved in the main and steadily consolidated.

The preservation and consolidation of the liberated zone constitutes a tremendous victory for our people, because the liberated zone which stretches from North to South and borders on China, Viet Nam and Cambodia, constitutes a solid base for the revolutionary movement in the whole country, and a source of inspiration for the struggle of the people living in areas under enemy control.

In the liberated zone, we have mobilized the population to step up production, to expand the areas

under cultivation, to grow spring crops and non-staple food crops, and to build hydraulic works. In order to help our peasants secure higher yields, we have built in Ban-Ban a water conservancy network capable of irrigating thousands of hectares of land; studies are being carried out with regard to the construction of other hydraulic networks. We have promoted the rehabilitation and development of a number of handicrafts, the building of a number of workshops such as blacksmith forges, weaving shops, rice-husking mills, etc. in order to meet the daily needs of the people. Besides, we have encouraged the exploitation of forest products, developed our work in the field of trade, purchasing farm and forest products from the people and supplying them with goods of prime necessity such as salt, cloth, farming implements etc. We have restored or built up many primary schools, developed junior secondary schools and set up, in several localities, schools for training primary school teachers. At present, there are in the liberated zone over 1,000 teachers and nearly 40,000 children attending primary schools. It is noteworthy that our mother tongue is now being used as medium of instruction both in the primary and junior secondary schools; a total of over 40,000 textbooks, with healthy and progressive contents, have been published. Early this year, we started popularising the script of the Meo nationality. To this end, over 50 teachers were trained to impart education in the Meo script. Dozens of hospitals and infirmaries have been built,

and about one hundred physicians and thousands of nurses trained. We have provided medical care to cadres, armymen and the population, and have developed a mass movement on observing hygiene and carrying out prophylactic measures. Thanks to all these steps, the living conditions of the people in the liberated zone have been improved, both in the material and cultural fields, though there are still a number of difficulties due to the war of destruction waged by the enemy. Unlike the situation in the zone under enemy control, security and order are ensured in the liberated zone where the various social strata and fraternal nationalities enjoy equal rights in the political field, are entitled to take part in public affairs and social works, and live a happy and sane life. Social evils such as robbery, gambling, prostitution etc., have been eradicated. It should be particularly noted that the civil servants, cadres and fighters of our two forces have joined the population in production work, displayed high endurance in face of hardships and endeavoured to build up the liberated zone in a self-reliant spirit.

In the military field, our armed forces have recorded good progress, both politically and militarily, and have grown mature in the fire of battle. Many units of ours have proved to be tenacious in defence, valiant in attack and intrepid in pursuit actions. Thanks to this, together with the various fraternal nationalities of our country, our armed forces have smashed many enemy attacks, foiled many enemy military operations, successfully defended our important strategic areas, and put

out of action over 15,000 puppet troops. What rejoices us greatly and fills us with pride is the fact that our troops and in the first place, our young but valiant Anti-Aircraft units, have courageously fought back the attacks of U.S. jets of all types and have shot down over 150 planes. As a result, we have been able to limit the effects of the enemy's war of destruction and to break the U.S. imperialists' much-vaunted "air superiority".

In short, over the past three years, our two forces and our entire people have won tremendous victories. This proves that the militant unity of our people constitutes an invincible force.

Dashing head-on against this great wall, the U.S. imperialists and their agents have suffered bitter defeats. Therefore, we have every ground to believe that the enemy, having failed to vanquish our patriotic forces and our people, will suffer still heavier and more ignominious defeats if it stubbornly persists in carrying on the war of aggression against our country.

These great achievements of ours are due to the justice of our cause, the correctness of our political line, the ardent patriotism of our cadres, troops and people, their deep hatred for the enemy, their unity and their determination to fight and to win. They are also due to the constant unity between our two forces in the struggle against the common enemy, to the continuous expansion of the anti-U.S patriotic front of our people, and to the approval and infinitely valuable support and assistance of the fraternal countries and the peace-loving peoples throughout the world.

Fellow Delegates,

The U.S. imperialists are now sustaining heavy defeats in South and North VietNam, and in our country. Yet they are stubbornly clinging to their policy of force, and are making every effort to intensify and expand the "special war" in South Viet Nam, and to widen the war of destruction in North Viet Nam.

It is to be expected that in coordination with the battlefield of South Viet Nam and in an attempt to retrieve their defeats and carry on the scheme of annihilating the patriotic forces of our people and turning our country into a new-type colony and a military base of aggression against the revolution in South-East Asia, the U.S. imperialists, in collusion with their satellites and particularly their henchmen in South Viet Nam and Thailand, and making use of the pro-U.S. reactionary clique in Laos, will extend and intensify the "special war" in our country. As a result, our struggle will grow even harder and fiercer. The enemy will multiply nibbling attacks on the liberated zone, launch more "clean-up" and "pacification" operations in the zone under his control, intensify the air war of destruction, step up the psychological warfare as well as spy and commando activities in our rear. The situation will take an extremely dangerous turn. At the same time, we must be prepared for another eventuality, that of the U.S imperialists' recklessly unleashing a major war in Indo-China.

But with their rock-like determination to defeat the aggressors, whatever the events and whatever the type of war may be, our two forces and the entire Laotian

people, fighting in unity, will unquestionably win glorious victory.

Fellow Delegates.

Proceeding from the specific conditions of our country, the patriotic and revolutionary forces have long realized the heavy yet glorious mission entrusted to them by history and our people, viz., to strive for an independent, unified, democratic and prosperous Laos.

To this end, the patriotic forces must resolutely struggle to defeat the war of aggression, to defeat neo-colonialism, the aggressors and the traitors, so as to completely liberate our country and regain genuine independence, sovereignty and unity for our Fatherland. On this basis, we shall build an independent, self-supporting and prosperous economy and a good regime ensuring genuine democracy and happiness to our people.

These tasks are closely inter-related. Only by foiling the aggression, defeating U. S. neo-colonialism and completely liberating our country that it will be possible to build a prosperous economy. On the other hand, it is essential to strive for national prosperity, develop a national and democratic economy and culture, and ensure a life of welfare and happiness to the people if national sovereignty and independence are to be safeguarded and consolidated.

In order to carry out this great revolutionary struggle, the patriotic forces must firmly grasp the

guiding principle of a protracted and arduous struggle waged by the entire people in all fields and in a self-reliant spirit. On the basis of our revolutionary gains, we must strive to consolidate and gradually develop our victories and resolutely struggle to the end to win complete victory.

Our urgent task now is to mobilize the whole people into the resistance for national salvation with the firm resolve to defeat the imperialists and their henchmen, whatever the type and intensity of the war may be.

To cope with this dangerous situation, the immediate tasks of the Patriotic forces and of our people are :

— to hold aloft the banner of peace, neutrality and national independence ; to rally all patriotic and peace-loving forces ; to strengthen the National United Front ; to consolidate the militant alliance between the Neo Lao Haksat and the patriotic Neutralist forces ; and to launch throughout the country a powerful struggle against the U.S. aggressors, for national salvation.

— to increase our forces in all respects ; to consolidate and develop our patriotic armed forces ; to defend and build up the liberated zone ; to step up the patriotic struggle of the various strata of our people in the zone under the control of the U.S. imperialists and their henchmen.

— to intensify our political struggle, to step up our international activities in order to enhance the international position of the patriotic forces and the role of the Neo Lao Haksat and patriotic Neutralist Ministers and Vice-Ministers in the National Union

Government; to secure the broad approval of progressive opinion throughout the world, as well as the material and moral aid of the governments and peoples of the fraternal countries.

In order to fulfil the above-mentioned tasks, our patriotic forces and our people must make every effort to carry out the following six major concrete tasks:

1. To strengthen the national united front, and launch a powerful struggle against the U. S. imperialists for national salvation:

To defeat the U.S. pirates and save our Fatherland and our own homes is at present our central slogan for uniting the people. The strengthening of the national united bloc and the rallying of all anti-U.S. forces constitute an important guarantee for victory. More than ever before, the patriotic forces must hold aloft the banner of peace, neutrality and national independence to rally all patriotic and peace-loving forces and individuals, to futher broaden the National United Front and drive the aggressors and the traitors to utter isolation.

The National United Front against U.S. imperialism, for national salvation must broadly embrace all social strata, unite all fraternal nationalities in the country, all compatriots both in the liberated zone and in the zone under the control of the pro-U.S. puppet administration, in short, the whole Laotian people. To strengthen unity, it is necessary to educate and mobilize the broad masses, to help them clearly realize the enemy and the danger which is facing our people, to bring into play their traditions of dauntless struggle,

and strengthen their confidence and their determination to defeat the U.S. imperialists for the sake of national salvation.

To actively work for closer unity among the various nationalities in the country, so that they may help one another in improving their living conditions, and combat the enemy's manœuvres of division. In the zone under the control of the pro-U.S. puppet administration, we must mobilize the broad masses and, at the same time, pay due attention to the civil servants, intellectuals, students and monks; we must try to win over even the patriotic elements in the ranks of the puppet administration and army. We must win over the patriots who are serving in the ranks of General Kongle's troops and are still under the influence of the reactionaries. We must perseveringly call on all those elements who have gone astray, including Prince Souvanna Phouma and General Kongle, to leave the path of betrayal and return to the ranks of the patriots.

It is necessary to unremittingly condemn the disruptive activities and crimes of the enemy, to unmask its deceptive and demagogic manœuvres, to expose the corrupt pro-U.S. puppet regime, to bring about a differentiation in the ranks of the reactionaries and utterly isolate the most dangerous "ultras"

2. To defend and build up the liberated zone in all respects, to turn it into a solid base for the nation-wide protracted struggle

Our vast liberated zone, the fruit of a long revolutionary struggle, is a solid base for our patriotic

struggle, both at present and in the future. The consolidation of the liberated zone in all respects will exert a tremendous political influence and will encourage our compatriots in the zone under the control of the pro - U. S. puppet administration to rise up in support of the Revolution. With a view to successfully defending and steadily building up the liberated zone, smashing the enemy's nibbling attacks and attempts to smuggle in bandits and commandos, and fighting against the war of destruction, we must rely on the people. We must persuade all our compatriots, irrespective of sex and age, to stand up in defence of the liberated zone and to strive eagerly to build and develop it.

Active propaganda efforts must, therefore, be made to raise the revolutionary consciousness of the people and inspire them to participate in the struggle against the U.S. aggressors for national salvation, take practical actions to frustrate the enemy's disruptive attempts, and make every effort to build their villages and a better life for themselves.

On the other hand, the greatest attention must be given to improving the living conditions of the people and increasing their forces. We must strive to develop the economy, with main emphasis on agriculture. The people must be encouraged to boost up production, grow more crops, develop non-staple food crops, improve farming techniques, develop animal husbandry and the exploitation of forest products.

We must strive to rehabilitate and develop industry, appropriately build industrial establishments to meet

the needs of the people, build new roads and develop internal trade exchanges and trade with the fraternal countries. We must pay due attention to building more schools, promoting a national and progressive system of education, and at the same time, popularising hygiene and prophylactic measures, organizing medical care, developing the good customs of our people and doing away with those backward customs detrimental to production and life,

In defending and building the liberated zone, every effort must be made to consolidate the revolutionary power at all levels and particularly at the grass-root level, and make it efficient in mobilizing the people for the maintenance of order and security, improving the living conditions of the masses, organizing and leading their struggle against the U.S. imperialists for national salvation.

We must train a numerous army of cadres dedicated to the people, having at heart their welfare and enjoying their love and confidence. At the same time, we must mobilize the patriotic armed forces to take an active part in mass work, to help people boost up production and raise their living standards, and to contribute to the building of the liberated zone.

3. To strengthen and consolidate the patriotic armed forces so as to ensure victory over the puppet troops:

The patriotic armed forces, in essence a revolutionary army, are a pillar of our people's struggle.

As an immediate step, they must be strengthened and consolidated so as to be in a position to smash

all nibbling attacks and eventually to defeat the puppet army.

We must strive to raise the political level, to enhance the patriotism and revolutionary consciousness of our fighters and their determination to defeat the U. S. aggressors and save the Fatherland and their own homes and to make of the patriotic forces an army with strong fighting spirit, good military techniques, strict organization and discipline. At the same time, care should be taken to promote good relations between the army and the people. The patriotic armed forces must respect, love and help the people. They must unremittingly fight the enemy, take part in mass work, increase production, practise economy, and make political, military and cultural studies.

They must enhance their inner unity; officers and men must be in close relations with one another, share weal and woe, stand united, esteem and love one another. The officers must heed the suggestions of the rank-and-file fighters and care for the latter's living conditions. Inferiors must comply with the orders of their superiors. In the fight against the common enemy, each unit must fight shoulder to shoulder, share weal and woe and unite closely with the others.

4. To vigorously push forward the people's struggle in the zone under the control of the pro-U.S. puppet administration:

The zone under the control of the pro-U.S. puppet administration is a densely populated and rich area, with important strategic highways. By perfidious and ruthless manœuvres, the enemy is now trying to pacify

his rear, grab manpower and squeeze financial and material resources for the war of aggression. The patriotic forces must create all necessary conditions to vigorously push forward the people's struggle in all possible forms, from lower to higher ones, to promote an ever stronger mass movement against the enemy, to frustrate his attempts at "pacification", to make his rear unstable, to wear out and scatter his forces and drive him to a passive position right in his own domain.

As an immediate step, we must expand by various means our propaganda work in order to give the various social strata a clear understanding of U.S. neo-colonialism and of the U.S. "special war", to denounce the crimes and disruptive activities of the aggressors and the traitors, and to condemn their corrupt regime.

We must endeavour to gradually develop the mass struggle, and intensify our propaganda work among the civil servants, intellectuals, students, and enemy soldiers.

It is necessary to step up the struggle for democracy and a better life, against the pressganging of manpower and troops, against terror and banditry; we must demand the improvement of the living conditions, the achievement of peace and neutrality, the carrying out of the political programme of the tripartite National Union Government and the restoration of that Goverment.

At the same time, we must endeavour to bring about the disintegration of the puppet army by calling on enemy troops to leave its ranks and return to their homes, to refuse to fight, to refuse to take part in

"clean-up" operations and to refuse to do harm to the population... We should also persuade the officers to stand up against the U.S. imperialists and the pro-U.S. reactionaries, to stage uprisings and coups d'etat, and to cooperate with the patriotic forces.

5. To intensify the political struggle, denounce and isolate the enemy, win the approval of public opinion on the basis of the preservation of the Geneva Agreements and the various Tripartite Agreements:

In order to closely coordinate the various aspects of our people's struggle against the U.S. imperialists for national salvation, it is necessary to intensify political struggle with a view to exposing the U.S. aggressors and their agents who have thoroughly scrapped the Geneva Agreements and the various tripartite agreements and have expanded the war of agression. At the same time, we must point out the unswerving policy of the Neo Lao Haksat and the patriotic Neutralist forces of observing and correctly implementing the agreements, carry still higher the banner of peace and neutrality, and struggle to preserve the legal bases already secured.

We must intensify, in all possible forms, the struggle of the broad masses throughout the country, and particularly in the zone under the control of the U.S. imperialists and their henchmen, so as to further expose and isolate the enemy, to win the approval of public opinion at home and abroad and vigorously step up the just struggle of our people.

We must make clear that, in the present juncture, there is only one correct solution to the Laotian problem:

to resolutely demand that the U.S. imperialists and their henchmen withdraw from Laos all military personnel, troops, weapons and war materials which they have illegally brought in, put an end to all intervention and aggression against Laos, and first and foremost, stop all air raids, nibbling attacks, introductions of bandits and disruptive activities against the liberated zone. In addition, the U.S. imperialists and their henchmen must be urged to restore the tripartite National Union Government both in its organizational structure and its working principles. In order to settle the pending problems and achieve gradual stabilization of the situation, we resolutely demand that the other two parties conduct negotiations in earnest.

For the time being, it is necessary to emphasize the role and activities of the Neo Lao Haksat and patriotic Neutralist Ministers and Vice-Ministers in the tripartite National Union Government, affirming their determination to go on exercising their functions and discharging their duty under the Zurich and Plain of Jars Agreements. We must carry on the struggle for the implementation of the internal and external policies of the tripartite National Union Goverment as laid down in its political programme.

6. To intensify our international activities so as to win still broader and stronger sympathy and support in all respects for the just struggle of our people:

Our struggle against the U.S. imperialists for national salvation enjoys the increasing approval and support of the world's peoples. In face of the U.S. manœuvres for intensifying and expanding the war of aggression,

it is all the more necessary to develop our international activities which should be considered of vital importance. We must denounce in time, more vigorously and by means of appropriate measures and forms, the U.S. imperialists' schemes and acts of aggression and war against our country, and expose their fraudulent manœuvres before world opinion. At the same time, we must continue to point out our goodwill in the settlement of the Laotian problem, secure stronger support from world opinion, and enhance the role of the patriotic forces of Laos in the international arena, particularly in Asia, Africa and Latin America. We must also tighten the relations of friendship with the fraternal countries, and win their approval and stronger support, both moral and material, including the supply of technical equipment, so as to increase our people's fighting capacity. In addition, we continue to support the struggle of the peoples of Asia, Africa and Latin America, and of all peace- and justice-loving peoples in the world against aggressive and bellicose imperialism headed by U.S. imperialism. We are determined to further tighten, face to the common enemy, U.S. imperialism, the militant solidarity of the fraternal peoples of Indo-China, who are fighting on the same battlefield and sharing the same conditions. We fully approve and support the four-point stand of the Government of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam and the five-point stand of the South Viet Nam National Front for Liberation, and regard them as the only correct solution to the Viet Nam problem. We resolutely support the fraternal people and Royal Government of Cambodia in their struggle against the U.S. imperialist aggressors and the Thailand

and South Vietnamese reactionaries for safeguarding their independence, neutrality and territorial integrity. We wholeheartedly approve and support the struggle waged by the Thailand people, under the leadership of the Thailand Patriotic Front, against the U. S. imperialists and the reactionary rulers of Thailand.

Fellow Delegates,

Ours is a small but heroic people. For over 10 years now, we have stood fast and fought with boundless courage, and have won victory after victory ; we have been marching shoulder to shoulder with the fraternal peoples of Viet Nam and Cambodia on the frontline of the struggle against the U.S. imperialists in South-East Asia. We have accepted the glory of acting as a shock brigade in the frontline of the struggle against the U.S. imperialists. We are fighting for our national liberation, and at the same time, are discharging our lofty internationalist duty to contribute to the defeat of U.S. imperialism, the international gendarme, and to the promotion of the cause of national liberation and peace in South-East Asia and the world.

The struggle against the enemy is growing ever fiercer. Our people are facing very heavy, yet most glorious tasks. We are determined not to flinch before any hardship and sacrifice, and will valiantly struggle till final victory.

Ours are a heroic people and a heroic army ; our political line is very correct ; we have close and great friends throughout the five continents. We are convinced that our people's struggle against the U.S. imperialists

for national salvation will be crowned with victory. The cause of building a peaceful, neutral, independent, democratic, unified and prosperous Laos will unquestionably triumph,

In the interests of our struggle against the U.S. imperialists for national salvation, let our entire people like one man close their ranks around the militant alliance between the Neo Lao Haksat and the patriotic Neutralist forces.

Let us valiantly march forward to new victories!